



Senate Bill No. 424

Special Act No. 14-22

**AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS
FOR CHILDREN IN THE CARE AND CUSTODY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (*Effective July 1, 2014*) (a) For purposes of this section:

(1) "Preschool-aged child" means any child age three to five, inclusive, who is placed in out-of-home care by the Commissioner of Children and Families pursuant to an order of commitment under section 46b-129 of the general statutes and who is not enrolled in a preschool program or kindergarten at the time of such placement; and

(2) "Eligible preschool program" means (A) a school readiness program, as defined in section 10-16p of the general statutes, (B) a preschool program offered by a local or regional board of education or regional educational service center, (C) a preschool program accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, (D) a Head Start program, or (E) any preschool program that the commissioner deems suitable to meet the needs of the child.

(b) Not later than January 1, 2015, the Commissioner of Children and Families, in consultation with the Office of Early Childhood, shall (1) adopt policies and procedures that maximize the enrollment of

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eligible preschool-aged children in eligible preschool programs, and (2) submit such policies and procedures to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, human services, education and appropriations, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

Sec. 2. (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1, 2015, the Commissioner of Children and Families, in consultation with the Office of Early Childhood, shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, human services, education and appropriations concerning (1) the number of eligible preschool-aged children, as defined in section 1 of this act, who are enrolled in an eligible preschool program, as defined in section 1 of this act, at the time that such children are placed in out-of-home care by the Commissioner of Children and Families pursuant to an order of commitment under section 46b-129 of the general statutes, (2) the number of eligible preschool-aged children who are not enrolled in an eligible preschool program at the time of such placement, (3) the number of children age birth to three, inclusive, who are placed in out-of-home care by the Commissioner of Children and Families pursuant to an order of commitment under section 46b-129 of the general statutes, (4) the number of eligible preschool-aged children who require special education and related services and the number and percentage of such children who enrolled in a preschool program, (5) an analysis of the availability of spaces in eligible preschool programs in relation to the geographic placement of eligible preschool-aged children described in subdivision (2) of this subsection, (6) an analysis of the availability of spaces in eligible preschool programs in relation to the nature of such eligible preschool program and the cost of such eligible preschool program to the Department of Children and Families, (7) an analysis of eligible preschool programs and

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transportation options that will minimize costs to the department, including eligible preschool programs that provide transportation or whose geographic proximity to a child's placement is such that the provision of transportation by a foster parent or caregiver is considered within the reasonable expectations of the duties of such foster parent or caregiver, and (8) a plan to provide priority access to eligible preschool-aged children described in subdivision (2) of this subsection at state and federally-funded preschool programs.

Approved June 13, 2014